
In other news

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Regional Coalition of LANL Communities meets to support northern New Mexico initiatives

The Regional Coalition of LANL Communities is comprised of representatives from the City of Española, Los Alamos County, Rio Arriba County, Santa Fe County, City of Santa Fe, Taos County, Town of Taos and the Pueblo of Ohkay Owingeh—all located near Los Alamos National Laboratory (LANL)—and was formed to ensure that national decisions reflect local circumstances and interests. The coalition members meet once a month in a public setting, and meeting locations rotate among the participating communities.

"The mission of the coalition is an important one," said Coalition Chair and Española Mayor Alice Lucero. "It is to help the communities around LANL unite together to ensure that we advocate for environmental remediation and to find a collective way to support

significant economic development, job retention and education projects that have a tremendous impact on our region."

The Regional Coalition's May 16 meeting, which took place in the City of Santa Fe Council Chambers, was a special strategic planning session to further develop the coalition's core focus areas. One of the key challenges for the May 16 participants was to more clearly define what economic development means in the context of the coalition's efforts and how to marshal political strength in support of existing initiatives.

The next meeting is scheduled for June 20 in the Taos County Chambers. For additional information, visit the [Regional Coalition of LANL Communities](#) website.

VAF recipient Titan Aerospace is acquired by Google, repays fund

When unmanned aerial vehicle manufacturer Titan Aerospace of Moriarty, New Mexico, received \$30,000 in seed money from Los Alamos Connect's Venture Acceleration Fund (VAF) in 2013 they hardly could have imagined that Google would purchase their company a year later. But this is exactly what happened and the sale marks an important milestone for the VAF's sustainability. Last year's implementation of a "payback trigger," initiated upon the sale of a VAF recipient, is resulting in a full re-investment of Titan's award back into the fund, paying it forward to this year's winners.

"The VAF is seeing true momentum here in New Mexico," David Pesiri, director of the Feynman Center for Innovation at Los Alamos National Laboratory," said. "We instituted the payback trigger last year in hopes that when a company sells or moves out of state the next entrepreneur down the line would have a chance at funding. This new component is showing early signs of success, and it's vital for future investments in New Mexico businesses."

The VAF will announce the latest round of awardees this month. "Titan Aerospace's repayment will add to the amount of this year's award," Kurt Steinhaus, director of the Community Programs Office at Los Alamos National Laboratory, noted, "bringing the total to \$407,000. From 2006 through 2012, Los Alamos National Security, LLC invested \$2.4 million into 30 companies, leveraging a \$48 million return on investment."

For additional information on Los Alamos Connect, see this issue's [Business networking and coaching at your doorstep](#) article. Additional VAF support was provided this year by Los Alamos County, the City of Santa Fe and the New Mexico Manufacturing Extension Partnership.

Veteran-owned business to be mentored by Los Alamos National Laboratory

Los Alamos National Laboratory and veteran-owned RG Construction of Rio Rancho signed a mentor-protégé agreement at the New Mexico Veterans Business Expo and Job Fair in Albuquerque on May 7. The Mentor-Protégé Program is a U.S. Department of Energy initiative designed to encourage and assist small, disadvantaged companies certified by the Small Business Administration.

"Mentor-protégé agreements with northern New Mexico businesses are beneficial to the Laboratory and also help local businesses grow and expand, which in turn contributes to the economic development of the region," said Chris Fresquez, Los Alamos' Small

Business Program manager. "We look forward to working with RG Construction through this new mentor-protégé agreement."

Interested in having your business become a Laboratory protégé? Visit the [Mentor, Protégé Program](#) website.

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